

this proposal for World Bank assistance. A reply was sent to the Chief Minister, Kerala stating that Kerala, being a debt-stressed state, may take recourse to additional external borrowings for priority projects, under the existing guidelines by agreeing to substitute or waive any other agreed source of borrowing and use that space for such additional borrowing. The Government of Kerala is yet to respond in this regard.

**Shortage of Indian Airlines staff at Chennai airport**

\*395. SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Indian Airlines staff working under various categories in major airports *viz.* Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai;

(b) whether Government are aware that there is a shortage of Indian Airlines staff in Chennai airport as compared to other private airlines; and

(c) what plans Government have to rectify the said shortage of Indian Airlines staff in Chennai airport?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The total number of Indian Airlines' staff working under various categories in Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai are 1882, 890, 1641 and 570 respectively.

(b) and (c) In the year 2000, the Government, while reverting the age of retirement from 60 years to 58 years in respect of employees of Indian Airlines Ltd., had also imposed a freeze on external recruitment in the non-operational categories with a view to lower the employee to aircraft ratio and decrease the over head expenditure of Indian Airlines Ltd. Further, the change in work-norms coupled with adoption of new technologies has resulted in lesser requirement of manpower particularly in non-core activity - areas. As the employee to aircraft ratio in Indian Airlines still continues to be very high as compared to other private carriers, there is no proposal at present to fill up the present vacancies which are based on old work-norms. However, for any additional requirement beyond the permanent strength available with Indian Airlines, it resorts to engagement of short-term/ad-hoc arrangements like redeployment of staff/officers from other Departments, engagement of daily rated employees and outsourcing certain activities.